

## URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES

**DATE:** May 23, 2012

**TIME:** N/A

**PLACE:** N/A

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Robert Barnes  
Gregory Borowski (Chair)  
Daryl Condon (Excused Item #1 - left after Item #4)  
Vincent Dumoulin  
Veronica Gillies  
David Grigg  
Bruce Hemstock  
Geoff McDonell (Excused Item #3)  
Norm Shearing  
Peter Wreglesworth

**REGRETS:**  
Helen Besharat  
Alan Endall  
Arno Matis

**RECORDING  
SECRETARY:** Lorna Harvey

---

ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	4500 Oak Street (Children's and Women's Health Centre of BC)
2.	2405-2445 Cornwall Street (Point Grey Private Hospital)
3.	1908 Scotia Street
4.	1545 West 8th Avenue
5.	3150 Commercial Drive

---

**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Borowski called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum. There being no New Business the meeting considered applications as scheduled for presentation.

1. **Address:** 4500 Oak Street (Children's and Women's Health Centre of BC)  
**DE:** N/A  
**Use:** Revised master plan including a new Acute Care Facility of 45 meters (148 feet) in height.  
**Zoning:** Amend CD-1  
**Application Status:** Rezoning  
**Review:** Second  
**Owner:** Provincial Health Services Authority  
**Architect:** DYS Architecture  
John Davidson, DYS Architecture  
Ron Yuen, Consultant to DYS Architecture  
**Delegation:** Mark Vaughan, Vaughan Landscape Planning  
Alan Grossert, Provincial Health Services Authority  
Eleanor Lee, Provincial Health Services Authority  
**Staff:** Yardley McNeill and Sailen Black

**EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)****Introduction:**

Yardley McNeill, Rezoning Planner, introduced the application as a new submission, connected to the 2010 Rezoning for the Acute Care facility, which was put on hold in 2011. The intention is to amend the CD-1 Bylaw with changes to Use, Density and Height. The project is proceeding through a P3 process, and as such there was no identified "Form of Development" submitted for review, instead there was a volume with a prescribed location and a set of "Design Standards" which will direct the design of the building at the development permit stage. Ms. McNeill noted that the Panel would see the project again during the development permit process.

Sailen Black, Development Planner, further described the proposal located between West 28th Avenue and West 32nd Avenue to the Catholic Charities site (St. Vincents), and Oak and Heather Streets. He added that it is a 46 acre site and has a slope from the southeast to the northwest corner. He also described the context for the area noting that single-family residential to each side of the site.

Mr. Black reminded the Panel that in November 2010 they supported a rezoning proposal that would add 302,000 square feet for a new Acute Care building, daycare and a family stay building. In a separate rezoning application in 2011, the Daycare and family stay were approved in principle. He added that the Panel also reviewed but did not support a Master Plan to guide future phases of the development.

In Phases 1, 2 and 3, the proposal is for the demolition of the A and L wings of the Shaughnessy block. The maximum height is proposed to change from 60 feet to 148 feet. The application is intended to accommodate a range of built forms within an overall envelope of setbacks, height and density. A new road connection will be introduced from Willow to Oak Streets. The Sunny Hill Hospital will be relocated on the site and as well a neighbourhood wellness walkway is proposed to be constructed part way around the perimeter.

In Phases 4 through 7, the Master Plan is for long-term redevelopment of the site including the extension of the Ambulatory and Acute Care buildings, replacement of the Women's Hospital and other future developments. The Master Plan aims to expand the area of green space, showcase leading edge sustainability practices and to reduce surface parking in the northeast corner around 2030. The heritage Shaughnessy building would be removed, with the Mental Health and Power Plant being retained.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

1. Does the Panel support the proposed range of forms possible within the proposed zoning and design standard?
2. Is the proposed zoning and design standard sufficiently developed to guide an appropriate solution?
3. Does the application address the Panel's consensus on key aspects of the Master Plan needing improvement noted in 2010?
4. Does the test design show the right balance between programmatic requirements and the single-family context?
5. Proposed design for on-site circulation and open spaces

Mr. Black took questions from the Panel.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Ron Yuen, Architect, further described the project. He gave a brief history noting when buildings were added to the site which had set the stage for the location of the new development. As well he described the proposed circulation through the site noting how the site will change over the next ten to fifteen years. In Phase 1 they will be adding the Day Care and the Ronald McDonald House. Phase 2 is for the Acute Care Centre and Phase 3 is accommodation for the Sunny Hill Health Centre. They are looking at occupancy for the Acute Care by about 2017 and the finalization of the third phase by 2020.

Mark Vaughan, Landscape Architect, said that there isn't a lot of landscaping in the first phase because there is only one building being added. They have been focusing on creating as many large open space options as possible. There will be a Children's Wellness Garden located at the arrival area with the goal of being a place of wonder and excitement. There is also an opportunity to include public art. The Women's Healing Garden is a more quiet and contemplative part of the site. In front of the future hospital development will be a public open space. There are plans for a cultural and educational public open space between the buildings with a possible amphitheater. The Wellness Walk has been improved to cover more of the site. They are also planning gathering and seating areas throughout the site.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

**Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- Add design life to the definitions;
- Consider breaking up the upper floor mass, in balance with the overall goal of centralizing the new massing;
- Improve visibility of the entry sequence;
- Leave design standards flexible to allow evolution over time;
- New Oak Street building in phase seven appears to be too low in intensity;
- Walkway should engage more and invite the neighbourhood in;
- More height in the centre of the site would offer more flexibility in site planning;

- Phases four to seven should be developed in more detail;
- More underground parking than proposed would allow for future flexibility in use of open spaces;
- Legibility of the front entries in phases four to seven needed more clarity;
- Routing connecting to Willow Street is overly circuitous;
- Range of open spaces including permeable and intimate spaces needs more clarity and hierarchy.

**Related Commentary:**

The Panel thought the massing had been improved from the previous proposal. They felt that a focus on height at the centre of the site was the right way to deal with the increased density. The Panel concurred that adding height at the centre of the site was the right strategy to develop the site, and some thought additional height should be allowed to free up other programmatic aspects of the project. One Panel member had some concerns regarding the concentration of solid mass at the upper levels of the Acute Care building. A couple of Panel members thought that more height might benefit the site planning including the phase seven building on Oak Street. Some members stated that the functionality of the health care should not be compromised to deal with uncertainty with the neighbours.

Several members felt that landscape buffers would form the key interface to the single family neighbours, rather than the building itself. The Panel was supportive of how the applicant was dealing with those interfaces and thought they would be addressed in greater detail.

The Panel thought the key aspects of the Master Plan needing improvements from the Panel's previous comments had been addressed well in particular with the modification of the height and mass and freeing up some of the components on the site.

The Panel felt that the basics of the proposed Design Standard were acceptable and that the document was the right length, with one member noting that "slimmer was better" as it was less prescriptive and would allow for flexibility.

Some members felt the energy metrics should be developed more and thought they were still undefined although the targets were supportable. There was a concern that since the project will be built out over a long period of time that the goals might need to be more formally established.

The Panel supported the new Willow Street connection. A couple of Panel members had a concern regarding the relationship with West 28th Avenue in part with the vehicular circulation and the interface with the bike routes. One Panel member noted that having more underground parking would allow greater freedom on the site surface in the future.

The Panel thought the design for on-site circulation and open spaces was better than the previous design. The notion of the nodes was strong and the Willow Street through route was supported however there were a number of Panel members who thought the route was circuitous. The Panel encouraged the applicant to let the green space evolve over time.

Some Panel members thought the range of open spaces was still a little unclear recognizing that the building massing will be shifting but felt the hierarchy should be more clearly established along with the permeability of the intimate spaces.

**Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Yuen thanked the Panel for some great comments. He reminded the Panel that the document is in draft form and there is still work to be done. He added that a lot of the commentary from the Panel will be included. He mentioned that they have been working on the plan for some time and it has been difficult trying to find a balance between being

prescriptive and non-prescriptive. Mr. Yuen added that they will look at the energy metrics and agreed that they needed to work on the entry sequence.

---

2.	<b>Address:</b>	<b>2405-2445 Cornwall (Point Grey Private Hospital)</b>
	<b>DE:</b>	N/A
	<b>Use:</b>	To expand an existing 3-storey Community Care Facility - Class B (Point Grey Private Hospital) with a 4-storey addition to the West and 3-storey addition to the East. The proposed height is 14.57 meters and the proposed floor space is 21,9456.42 square meters with a FSR of 2.43.
	<b>Zoning:</b>	RM-4 to CD-1
	<b>Application Status:</b>	Rezoning
	<b>Review:</b>	First
	<b>Owner:</b>	The Care Group
	<b>Architect:</b>	Stuart Howard Architecture
	<b>Delegation:</b>	Stuart Howard, Stuart Howard Architecture Nan Legate, Stuart Howard Architecture Damon Oriente, Damon Oriente Ltd. Landscape Architects
	<b>Staff:</b>	Grant Miller and Anita Molaro

---

## EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-2)

### Introduction:

Grant Miller, Rezoning Planner, introduced the proposal for a rezoning application to expand the existing Residential Care Facility at Cornwall and Balsam Streets. The existing facility is permitted under the existing RM-4 zoning. Mr. Miller described the policy context noting that the existing care facility is a 3-storey building with 76 beds. The proposal is to redevelop the properties adjacent to the existing facility with a 3-storey addition to the east and a 4-storey addition to the west. The expanded facility would accommodate 170 beds. Rezoning is required to approve an increase in density and height and a relaxation of parking requirements. Mr. Miller added that as the

Application was made in February 2012 it is subject to the City's Green Buildings policy requiring LEED™ Gold.

Anita Molaro, Development Planner, further described the proposal noting the context for the area is comprised of a number of low-rise residential building typically in the form of apartments. A number of these low rise apartment buildings are of a significant length. The base zoning permits sites for dwelling purposes with a maximum frontage of 150 feet. The site next door is 150 feet long but across street there are sites that are 200 feet and 150 feet in width. Ms. Molaro noted that as an institutional use, the maximum frontage provision does not technically apply.

The proposal combines the original site of 150 feet plus two additional 50 feet sites on either side for an overall dimension of 250 feet. Ms. Molaro noted that the site has a significant slope from the front to the rear. The proposal is seeking an overall height increase to 48 feet measured from the lane. The proposal is seeking an increase of approximately 3.5 feet at the leading edge on the envelope measured at the Cornwall Street elevation. At the west end of the site the building is generally within the height limits but there are locations at the rear where it exceeds the 35 feet.

Ms. Molaro explained that some yard variations are also being required. The proposal meets the front yard requirement of 20 feet but the rear yard requirement of 15 feet is requested to be reduced down to 8 feet at the east end of the building.

---

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

Does the Panel support the proposal developed for this site with consideration for the following:

- expansion of the institutional use (Community care - Class B) within this residential context, if so, what measures might be consider to mitigate impacts onto nearby adjacent neighbours (loading, parking, garbage);
- increase in building height above 35.1 feet to 47.80 feet (measured from the lane) taking into consideration view and shadow impacts;
- increase in density from 1.45 FSR to 2.43 FSR;
- building siting including proposed setbacks;
- building's overall design including its streetwall scale and proportion;
- landscape treatments; and
- sustainability attributes (LEED Gold).

Mr. Miller and Ms. Molaro took questions from the Panel.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Stuart Howard, Architect, further described the proposal and explained that it was a difficult site. The existing building was built in 1962 and eight or nine years ago the third floor was expanded. He noted that they tried to break the massing down by incorporating large recesses into the building with some living walls and changes in material. He said that they have done a lot of work on meeting some high sustainability goals. They have decided to upgrade the heating system to geo thermal and they had added a lot of green elements to the roof and walls to help blend into the landscape. The green roof will mitigate the view issues and they are retaining a serious heritage landscape element which is the black locust tree. The majority of the parking will be for staff and they are working to try to reduce the amount needed since the site is located on a transit route. He added that they continue to work on the garbage/recycling/loading issue along with retaining the view. Mr. Howard noted that the beds will be funded by the provincial government and there is a huge demand in the neighbourhood for ageing in place and senior facilities.

Damon Oriente, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans and remarked that the keeping the heritage tree was important. He said they also wanted to maintain the type of landscaping that is already along the street with yew hedging, shrub planting and stepped plantings to the lower patios. More greenery is planned for the site as well as a patio on the southwest corner. He noted that they are looking at adding a green roof with an outdoor amenity space on the east side of the roof. They will be adding a fish pond to the area. They are also adding a new green roof to the existing building.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

**Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- Consider moving the bus stop to the west for less interference with the drop off area;
- Consider adding public art to the project;
- Design development to make the lower units more liveable.

**Related Commentary:**

The Panel supported the proposal and agreed that it was a challenging site.

The Panel supported the expansion of the institutional use within the residential context and the efforts to mitigate loading, parking and garbage. The Panel supported the increase in the building height. They felt the height on Cornwall Street was supportable as it will barely be above the height normally allowed under the guidelines. The Panel supported the increase in

density conditional on mitigating the lower spaces as there were some concerns raised regarding the level of liveability. The Panel supported the siting and setbacks as well as the overall design of the buildings including the streetwall proportion. The Panel also thought that the building massing was broken up well and appreciated the carrying of the materials around to the back of the building.

Several Panel members thought the bus stop location could be shifted to the west of the vehicular drop off to reduce conflicts. A couple of Panel members thought the amenity space could be on the Balsam Street side at grade rather than having private rooms. Some Panel members would also like to see public art in the proposal.

Some Panel members felt that trying to preserve the private views was actually hindering the architecture of the building. As a result there was more livable space being put below grade that was a concern to the Panel members. They thought the subterranean units didn't work and would be difficult living space even with light wells.

The Panel supported the landscape treatments and the efforts to save the tree as well as the addition of green roofs. A couple of Panel members would like to see a canopy on the roof garden for some weather protection taking care to mitigate view impacts. Several Panel members had concerns whether the tree could be saved given the potential size of the root ball. The Panel thought the green wall was a little ambitious and may not be successful but supported the greening of the lane. Some Panel members thought that having trees on the roof might affect views across the building and suggested lower plantings.

Regarding sustainability, the Panel thought LEED™ Gold was supportable.

**Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Howard agreed that they are pushing some density below grade and they have had discussions about reallocation of the density. He added that views are important to the neighbourhood and they are trying to alleviate the neighbours concerns. He agreed to look at the landscaping issues regarding having trees on the roof decks. Mr. Howard added that he appreciated the positive comments on the architecture.



---

3.	<b>Address:</b>	<b>1908 Scotia Street</b>
	<b>DE:</b>	415597
	<b>Use:</b>	Development of a 6-storey residential building with artist/residential, 60 units in total.
	<b>Zoning:</b>	IC-3
	<b>Application Status:</b>	Complete
	<b>Review:</b>	First
	<b>Owner:</b>	310 East 2nd Development Partnership
	<b>Architect:</b>	Shift Architecture
		Peter Buchanan, Shift Architecture
	<b>Delegation:</b>	Randy Sharp, Sharp Diamond Landscape Architects Carlo Medla, 310 East 2nd Development Partnership
	<b>Staff:</b>	Dale Morgan

---

### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (7-1)

#### **Introduction:**

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a 6-storey building with artist/residential uses. He noted that the dwelling and residential uses associated with the artist studios is a conditional use. The zoning for the site is IC-3 and Mr. Morgan described the external design as outlined in the district schedule. He explained that no yards are permitted along the street, the first storey to have maximum visibility from the street and be no more than one metre above or below grade. Mr. Morgan described the context and mentioned that in the surrounding area there are numerous high density live/work developments.

Mr. Morgan gave some background for the area and described the proposal noting the form of development is an “L” shaped building with parking access that creates a unique courtyard to allow for artist’s exhibits. He added that there is a strong horizontal massing with continuous balcony projections proposed. Materials include metal panels, Swiss pearl, standing seam metal cladding and concrete.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

- Materiality and expression;
- Ramp access location;
- Functionality of artist work space and variety of unit types and size;
- Proximity issues to adjacent building vis-à-vis overlook/ privacy and view obstructions; and
- Bicycle storage location at grade.

Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

#### **Applicant’s Introductory Comments:**

Peter Buchanan, Architect, further described the proposal noting that there are a lot of features that would normally be found in larger projects. It draws on the precedent set by other buildings in the neighbourhood in terms of artist’s live/work studios. He said they wanted the building to be a vibrant addition to the community with a private courtyard for the residents. They also wanted to be able to provide a multi-use and public workshop amenity to the building that is connected to the courtyard with a wall of glass that runs along 2nd Avenue. He noted that 48 of the 60 units have views to the northeast or to the northwest with the top units drawing light from the east and west side of the building. Mr. Buchanan described the materials noting that they plan to use titanium metallic alucobond that will be used in the

---

horizontal standing seam locations. Mr. Buchanan also described the unit layout and explained that they have designed them to allow for as much liveable space as possible.

Randy Sharp, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping noting that they plan on modular paving along the fronting street for an indoor/outdoor relationship. The courtyard has a lot of sun exposure with plantings over the parkade access. As well, the community room will open into the courtyard and bicycle storage and repair is also planned for the courtyard area.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

**Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- Design development to move the bike storage to the parkade;
- Further clarify the expression of the building;
- Consider the unit layout to facilitate combining of units; and
- Design development to improve the courtyard for art production.

**Related Commentary:**

The Panel supported the proposal as well as the use.

The Panel thought the artist's work space and unit type were appropriate and affordable. The also supported the location of the parking ramp and had no issue with the proximity to adjacent buildings.

Several Panel members suggested the applicant have more fun with the elevations with one Panel member noting that the strength of the facades is broken by the strong white vertical expression. A couple of Panel members thought the building expression didn't turn the corner well into 2nd Avenue and needed to be resolved. Another Panel member thought the expression should be gritty and robust with a more industrial expression and that the colour choice could be improved, while other Panel members expressed support for the wood in the lobby and thought it could be included elsewhere in the design.

One Panel member noted that it was important to focus on the aspect of art production rather than display. As well it was suggested that all doors, staircases and elevator doors needed to be large enough to move large art pieces through the spaces.

Although the Panel supported the unit sizes, one Panel member suggested that the unit layout needed to be carefully designed with storage for tools and supplies. A couple of Panel members suggested the units could be designed so that two units could be combined in order to have more space.

The Panel agreed that the bike storage needed to be in the parkade and that the area could be used to increase the workshop space. One Panel member suggested the amenity space could be open on both ends. Another Panel member was supportive of the glazing at the end of the corridor.

Regarding the landscaping, some Panel members thought the unit pavers didn't work and that there could be more outdoor space for the artists to create projects. One Panel member noted that the urban agriculture could be strengthened. Another Panel member suggested adding a water feature to represent the historic Brewery Creek.

**Applicant's Response:**

Peter Buchanan thought the Panel had some great comments.

---

4.	<b>Address:</b>	<b>1545 West 8th Avenue</b>
	DE:	415620
	Use:	To construct a new 18 unit multiple dwelling.
	Zoning:	C-3A
	Application Status:	Complete
	Review:	First
	Owner:	Kenstone Properties Ltd.
	Architect:	Office of McFarlane Biggar
		Steve McFarlane, Office of McFarlane Bigger
	Delegation:	Jean-Philippe Delage, Office of McFarlane Bigger
		Jeff Cutler, Space2Place
	Staff:	Dale Morgan

---

#### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

##### Introduction:

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a new 8-storey, eighteen unit dwelling over two levels of underground parking. The project is located in the C-3A District of Burrard Slopes. The site is located on the north side of West 8th Avenue between Granville and Pine Streets. It is a mid-block site and has a sloping grade of approximately ten feet, falling from the street to the lane. The building will contain eighteen units of either two or three bedrooms. Four units have direct access at grade plus two townhouses have direct access off the street.

Mr. Morgan described the context for the area noting that the site is within a predominately residential neighbourhood, surrounded by a diverse mix of aging, smaller scale developments, typically with commercial uses and with more recent high density residential developments with heights up to a maximum of 100 feet. Mr. Morgan explained that since it is a small site in a mid-block location, it does not qualify for building height above the 70 foot range, although some extra height may be considered because of the sloping grade, subject to good urban response, view analysis and response from the neighbourhood. He added that the proximity to the existing low rise commercial redevelopment of adjacent sites and testing the future viability of the corner site has been requested.

Mr. Morgan mentioned that the C-3A policy is currently under review. It is anticipated in the near to medium term, that the Burrard Slopes area will retain existing densities and heights of up to 3.3 FSR and 100 feet, noting in the C-3A Schedule itself there is no limit on height.

The form of development is for an 8-storey development with an “L” shaped floor plate that is organized around a west facing courtyard, with a 3-storey podium base extending the length of the site frontage with an 8-storey vertical massing, located tight to the east sideyard, immediately adjacent to the low rise commercial building. The materials include light weight composite panels, framed glass guardrails with a concrete core.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

- Height: Proposed height is one storey higher than the recommended guidelines height of 70 ft. Is this supportable? Should the building be stepped back to reduce shadow impact on the adjacent development at the lane?
- Wall treatment, east elevation and west elevation of the higher massing: Considering existing low rise development or potential redevelopment of the site(s) to the east with a higher massing up to 100 + ft., comments requested on material treatment and

size of wall at the east property line. Further commentary requested on the blank wall facing the private roof top garden, podium level.

- Livability: Comments on privacy impact of corner units, outdoor space and common access to the landscape courtyard.

Mr. Morgan took questions from the Panel.

**Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Steve McFarlane, Architect, said he wanted to make a point of clarification regarding the extra storey. He noted that the height envelope is within the top floor and they are asking for a concession for additional feet and not additional floors. He added that the approach to the design was for a modest infill building and that there is an opportunity to create a cohesive public realm along West 8th Avenue and contribute to the streetwall. The setbacks are conforming to the guidelines and there is a slight stepping of the mass on the east side. As well there are party wall conditions on both sides. The narrowness of the midrise element was something they worked to achieve and was driven by the relationship to the building next door so as to respect the privacy of the neighbours. Mr. McFarlane said he thought the units had a high level of liveability with only two suites per floor. He added that the project brings a unique perspective to market housing that is available in the area with some three bedroom suites. There is an outdoor amenity that will help to mitigate impacts on the neighbouring building. Regarding sustainability, he noted that they are targeting LEED™ Silver equivalency. The strategy includes integrated solar shading with broad balconies and deep overhangs and as well there is a less than 50% glazing to solid. Mr. McFarlane described the material and colour palette.

Jeff Cutler, Landscape Architect, described the landscaping noting that there is planting on the street frontage and planters on the roof deck. Bamboo will be planted along the back to cover the blank wall.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

**Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- Consider providing windows on blank western wall; and
- Treat core wall at the east property line in a manner consistent with the high quality material used elsewhere.

**Related Commentary:**

The Panel supported the proposal and thought it was an excellent project.

The Panel agreed that the extra height was supportable given the elevation of the towers around the site and the quality of the project.

The Panel suggested there should be some articulation or other treatment on the blank wall on the east façade. As well a number of Panel members suggested getting light into the kitchens with use of a slotted window at counter height just below the cabinets. One Panel member suggested making the elevator core less deep into the building and closer to the lobby.

A couple of Panel members suggested there should be a common amenity space in the building but most felt there was not a need. As well a couple of Panel members thought there wasn't a need for a children's play area. One Panel members suggested making the courtyard more liveable for longer parts of the season and suggested adding a gas fireplace and seating area.

One Panel member suggested the applicant include a bold piece of art in the courtyard, something that would add to the experience of people who live in the building.

**Applicant's Response:** Mr. McFarlane said he welcomed all the Panel's comments and appreciated their compliments.

---

5.	<b>Address:</b>	<b>3150 Commercial Drive</b>
	<b>DE:</b>	415579
	<b>Use:</b>	To construct a new elementary/secondary school on this site.
	<b>Zoning:</b>	C-2C1
	<b>Application Status:</b>	Complete
	<b>Review:</b>	First
	<b>Owner:</b>	Stratford Hall Foundation
	<b>Architect:</b>	Omicron Architecture
	<b>Delegation:</b>	Kevin Hanvey, Omicron Architecture Randy Sharp, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architects
	<b>Staff:</b>	Danielle Wiley

---

### EVALUATION: SUPPORT (8-0)

#### **Introduction:**

Danielle Wiley, Development Planner, introduced the proposal for a new middle school on two consolidated lots. The proposal will be part of a small campus containing a new primary school which was built immediately to the north about two years ago and a secondary school which is in the original school's building located two lots to the north. Ms. Wiley described the context for the area nothing the adjacent SkyTrain line and one and two-family residential buildings. In describing the proposal, Ms. Wiley noted that the main entry will be from Commercial Drive. The building will have 2-storeys of classrooms and open learning studios as well the third partial storey will give access to the roof which will be used as an outdoor amenity and play space. As well there are two storeys below grade for a gym and support spaces. Parking is provided under the SkyTrain structure and staff are considering relaxations for car and bike parking due to the proximity to the SkyTrain Station.

Ms. Wiley noted that staff are generally comfortable with the proposed massing and density and are seeking guidance on the selection and use of materials and the overall appropriateness of the design. Regarding the roof deck, she noted that there is a similar roof deck on the primary school to the north. She added that the roof of this proposal will be used as a more passive play area than the one at the primary school. As for landscaping, Ms. Wiley mentioned that the applicant proposed trellises as screening from the SkyTrain and to provide some acoustical barrier. As well raised planters are planned on the south edge with a grassy knoll at the centre and hardscape around the perimeter.

Advice from the Panel on this application is sought on the following:

- General design, architectural expression and materials.
- How the building addresses the street, particularly the street corners, along 14th and 15th Avenues, specifically with regards to pedestrian interest.
- Development of the main entry and building edge along Commercial Drive, with regards to animation of the public realm.
- The inhabited roof: Appropriateness of screening from the SkyTrain; Choice of materials for surfaces; Active/passive spaces; and Landscape design.
- Any other development or design issues of interest to the Panel.

Ms. Wiley took questions from the Panel.

#### **Applicant's Introductory Comments:**

Kevin Hanvey, Architect, described the programming for the school as a way to explain how the building was laid out and how it will be used by staff and the students. He noted that they have

---

taken the space below grade and created a gymnasium. There is a mezzanine area with fitness uses on it and then two instructional levels and an occupied roof. He described how the building is organized which is based on the learning modules and those have been grouped into pods of either two or three. He added that they took the organizing principle into consideration in order to find space large enough so that they can be opened up to be used in different ways. Mr. Hanvey described the architectural features noting that there is a high importance within the school placed on transparency--being able to see from level to level from common areas into classrooms. It is a very participatory style of education and a very flexible style as well. Mr. Hanvey described the colour and material palette for the proposal.

Randy Sharp, Landscape Architect, described the landscape plans noting that the lane and SkyTrain will be screened with the use of rigid trellis panel structures with continuous trenches and robust plantings. The roof top is an important part of the school and they will be working with the school to develop the space. There will be picnic tables with covers and they will be adding edible landscaping. The whole roof will mitigate storm water and as a well a portion of the area will contain a green roof.

The applicant team took questions from the Panel.

**Panel's Consensus on Key Aspects Needing Improvement:**

- Carefully consider colour palette on the façade;
- Design development to the articulation on the south façade;
- Consider increasing the landscape durability at the main entry along Commercial Drive;
- Consider adding more bicycle parking;
- Review the structure for the inhabited roof;
- Look for a mural opportunity on the roof;
- Consider removing the mound from the centre of the roof play area; and
- Consider adding a covered area on the roof.

**Related Commentary:**

The Panel supported the proposal and it thought it was generally a good design.

The Panel thought the design and architectural expression was well done and had an element of fun. However a couple of Panel members thought the middle years school should be more sophisticated looking and a couple of Panel members thought the colour choices could be less strong. They also thought the building addressed the street well including at the corners and that the main entry was clearly defined. The Panel did not have any concerns regarding the acoustics and the sustainability strategy as they thought it was well developed.

Several Panel members thought the south façade wasn't as strong as the others and suggested more articulation. One Panel member thought a mural could be added near the roof top as the public wouldn't have access and therefore it wouldn't be defaced.

A couple of Panel members thought there should be more parking for bicycles. A couple of Panel members had some concerns for the pickup and drop off area noting that it needed hardscape so it wouldn't turn into a muddy area.

The Panel supported the landscape plans and liked how the roof was being programmed. However several Panel members thought the mound would be voided out over time and suggested removing it from the landscape plans. Also several Panel members suggested adding some coverage for inclement weather. One Panel member suggested adding some play equipment to the roof using vertical elements. Several Panel members noted that the trellis was ineffective for providing acoustical separation from the SkyTrain and felt it could be

removed. A couple of Panel members suggested using materials other than wood on the roof for long term durability.

**Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Hanvey thanked the Panel for their comments and would take them all to heart. He said that the acknowledgment of the presentation was appreciated. They are intending to provide ample bike parking on the site. There is an active bus program at the school and a lot of staff and students use the SkyTrain. Regarding sustainability, the client doesn't want to pay for LEED™ as they would rather put the money in the building. He said he appreciated the comments regarding the vulnerability of wood products and would look at other materials for the roof. As to the colour, he said that the design team is comfortable with the colour palette and that the client loves the colours.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.